



## Bardstown Police Officer Jason Woodson

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It's no wonder Jason Woodson says he has a great relationship with his community. His friendly demeanor and positive outlook are inviting and his passion for his work would make anyone feel safe. It is inevitable that these qualities have something to do with the success Woodson already has enjoyed in his six short years as an officer with the Bardstown Police Department. His curiosity and heart for the community have driven him to develop and expand two of the agency's most successful programs — the explorers program for teenagers pursuing a future in law enforcement and the agency's first cyber crimes unit.

With a total of 12 years in the field under his belt and varying types of service to the public, 34-year-old Woodson still is eager to learn more. That voracity for more is what is sure to keep him moving up the ranks.

**I'm originally from** Shepherdsville. My wife and I were looking at some property over in Taylorsville and my dad said there was a super Wal-Mart over here in Bardstown. There wasn't at the time, but we drove over here. My wife saw a house in Bloomfield, and the second time I saw it, we owned it. We've been there ever since. Have you ever seen that movie with Tom Hanks, "The Money Pit"? Yeah, that's my house.

**I came to Bardstown** for more opportunities for advancement. I have been very, very happy since I have been here. I can't complain, they have been very good to me.

**I took over the Explorer Program** about two years ago. Right now we have 11 kids. I say kids, they are 14 to 20 years old. Their main goal is to seek out employment in law enforcement. We're glad we can give them the opportunity. We do all kinds of basic patrols, investigations, show them how to work scenes and they help us out with events. They thought it was going under and asked me if I would like to take it and see what I could do with it. We have doubled the number of kids we started with.

**I think it's a must** because they get to see our world and see if it is something they truly want to do. We don't come in and just push a pencil. We don't just come in and work on computers. I wear several hats here. Even though I might be in here

*"I'm a hands on kind of learner, so that's how I like to teach them. They're like little alligators, they keep chomping for more. They love it."*

working on a computer doing something, if I get a call, I have to go. We don't have the luxury of having that many officers where I can just sit in here. The explorers get to see that. That tells them real quick whether they want to do it or not.

**It's kind of like Christmas morning** when you wake up and get to see the excitement on their face. That's what it is like when I work with the explorers and get to see their excitement. That is what I strive for. When I get those smiles and comments — they are kind of like my own children. It lets me know I'm doing what I need to do and getting a great response from the community.

**I'm kind of a technology nerd.** When (Chief Rick McCubbin) came in, he let us start the cyber crimes unit. The world is turning to technology. We used to get burned alive with (the community news website) Topix.com and eBay scams, cyber bullying and all that. I felt like it was important, that we needed something in this area. And since I do like technology, I volunteered.

**I work on** the child pornography, the scams and the Topix complaints. I think of Topix like a bathroom wall, personally. It's pretty bad. It worries me because I have two daughters myself, and if I can stay ahead of the game, I know what to look for at my own house when they are on the computer. My computer is really restricted at the house. I'm scared, to be honest. My daughter begs about every day for a Facebook account, and I won't let her have one.

**The delay in information** is a challenge in cyber crimes cases. I'll be able to find out certain things, then I have to subpoena others, and that takes awhile. Some of our detectives in other units can solve cases in a day or a week. It might take me several weeks to get one subpoena back in a cyber-crimes case. Then I have to go to the next round. The hardest part I have seen so far is finding a way to put one particular person out of a household at that computer when the crime was committed. That's a challenge, and that's your main goal.

**You have to have integrity.** You have to be consistent. You just have to know your job and know your community. I am big on community. Unfortunately, like anywhere, there are bits and pieces you could do without. But as a whole, I love them. They will treat you well, help you more times than not and send you in the right direction a lot of times, if you're good to them. I'm very fortunate to have a good relationship with our community.

**I would love to** have more training in computers. I would love to devote more time to it and devote more time to the explorers. We just don't have the manpower, so it limits me a lot of times. But, the guys here are very good, if I need time working on a computer case and am right in the middle of a chat or something, they are very good to pick up the call for me and go on. That helps out tremendously. You can only think of so many excuses in a chat for why you have to leave.

**If something is new** to me, there is a chance somebody has already been through a similar scenario. Just ask other officers for help — there is a wealth of knowledge out there. A new guy might learn something new from the academy that the older guys don't know, and the older guy might say, "Well, if you get stuck in this situation, this is what I do, and I've been doing it for 20 years." I have found anybody I have ever had to talk to has been nothing but super helpful.

**You learn something** every day through different scenarios and different things happening around you. That is probably one of the biggest chores of law enforcement, I think, learning how to adapt. You might go to court one day and it might be the same type of case you had a year ago, but it goes a totally different way. You go to a call and have to adapt to what is going on there. Sometimes you get to a call and think, "What the heck is going on here?" Then you have to figure it out, take control and do what you need to do. That's just how it goes.

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